

StuffIt Primer

Why do I need StuffIt Deluxe™?

The #1 reason computer users find StuffIt products indispensable is their ability to Expand files and folders that have been sent and downloaded via email, Web, or some other Internet source. Files obtained from CD's, Hard Disks, or other disks may also need to be Expanded even though they may not have been sent over the Internet.

Why do I need to Expand?

Almost every file, and certainly every folder downloaded to a Macintosh from any Internet source is compressed (made smaller in size), or encoded (protected from damage) or both. You must decompress and decode such files before you can open, view and possibly edit them. When StuffIt products decompress and/or decode a file, we call it Expansion. Without Expansion, you will have no chance of being able to use the file. You must expand a file before you can open it!

How do I Expand?

We did make it easy. Do you know how to "Drag and Drop"? If you know how to drag and drop, you already know how to use our StuffIt Expander™. If you don't know how to drag and drop, we will show you in this and the next section.

StuffIt Expander is the easiest way to Expand a compressed or encoded file. StuffIt Expander is the easiest way to Expand a compressed or encoded file. Simply take the file to be Expanded and Drag and Drop it onto the StuffIt Expander icon.

***Fig1. Drag and Drop
On StuffIt Expander***



When Expansion is complete, a brand new file or folder will magically appear in the same folder where the original unexpanded file was when you dragged it. Therefore, a file that started out on the Desktop will cause a new file or folder to appear on the Desktop. A file that started out in your Downloads folder will cause a new file or folder to appear in your Downloads folder. This new file is the Expanded file, the file you will want to open (see section e. for tips on opening files). If it is a folder, the folder will contain file(s) you will want to open. The original unexpanded file will still be in its original location in case you want to save it.

Fig. 2 The Result! (Hopefully)



This Drag and Drop idea just isn't working for me...

OK, sometimes your first attempts at Drag and Drop may miss the mark, quite literally. You may notice that the StuffIt Expander icon is kind of small and narrow in the middle. You may be trying to Drag and Drop something onto it and just barely be missing the icon.

To successfully Drag and Drop any file onto any icon you must position the tip of the mouse arrow so that it is touching the file you want to drag. Now hold the mouse button down, the file will turn dark. With the mouse button held down move the tip of the mouse arrow so that it is also touching some part of the icon. You will know it is touching when the icon also turns dark. That is your cue that you can now let go of the mouse button.

If you continue to have problems dragging and dropping onto an icon, you can also drag and drop into the StuffIt Expander application window. The StuffIt Expander application window opens when you launch the StuffIt Expander application.

Fig 3. The StuffIt Expander Application Window



You have now successfully Dragged and Dropped. You will find that you Drag and Drop often when using your Macintosh. The most common use of Drag and Drop is when you throw something into the Trash Can.

How do I open the file? **(All that work and the file still isn't open?!?!)**

This part of the process can be as simple as double-clicking the Expanded file. However, the process could be a little more com-

plicated. Until now you've been dealing with only two software programs: StuffIt Expander and the Finder (the core of the Macintosh Operating System). The file that was revealed by the Expansion process was put there by whomever you got the file from. Any file can be compressed or encoded. There are literally thousands of different software programs that could have created that file.

If the file has lost its software association information, or if you do not own the software that was used to create the file, you will not be able to open the file with a simple double-click. If the provider of the file can tell you what software was used to create the file, and you have a copy of that software installed on your computer, you can Drag and Drop the file onto the icon for that software (in the same way you dragged the unexpanded file onto the StuffIt Expander icon). The software will launch and open the file.

If you do not own the software that was used to create the file you can, of course, purchase it or possibly find it as a download on the Internet. There may be other software you do own that will open this kind of file. For example, if you have software that views pictures, it will probably open most kinds of picture files. This kind of software cross matching will take a little research and a little guess work.

Finally, there is software available for purchase that allows you to "translate" files from one kind to another. Let's say you have AppleWorks as your word processor and you are sent a compressed file that was created using Microsoft Word. You could Expand it by Dragging and Dropping it onto the StuffIt Expander icon, and then use translation software to change it into an AppleWorks file. You could even edit it in AppleWorks and then change it back into a Microsoft Word file so the person who sent it to you could read your edits when you send it back.

Why should I compress files and folders?

Compression has many advantages. The #1 reason to use compression is for purposes of transporting files and folders via email, Worldwide Web, or some other Internet source. When you send files via email, or "post them to a Web site" (make them available for download), you want them to be as small as possible so they take less time to send (upload) and receive (download). When you want to send or post a folder, you must use compression. Folders cannot be sent or posted unless they are compressed first.

In the sections on Expansion we spoke about Encoding as a way to protect files from damage as they travel across the Internet. In most cases, when you use StuffIt compression, you do not have to worry about encoding. StuffIt compression [StuffIt archives (.SIT and .SITX), and StuffIt Self-extracting files for Windows (.EXE) and Macintosh (.SEA)] includes protection as part of the compression process. You can think of a StuffIt compressed file as data being squeezed tightly into a hard protective shell.

There is one exception. If you want to post a StuffIt Self-extracting for Macintosh file (.SEA) to a Website or other Internet site, you will need to encode it using MacBinary (.bin) or BinHex (.hqx) encoding (see Chapter 3 of the StuffIt Deluxe Users Guide.pdf. It gets installed on your computer as an electronic document in your StuffIt Deluxe folder, in a folder called Documentation. It is the only complete manual for StuffIt Deluxe.)

How do I Compress?

We made compression just as easy as Expansion. Just Drag and Drop.

DropStuff™ is the easiest way to compress file(s) and folder(s). Simply take the file to be compressed and Drag and Drop it onto the DropStuff icon.

***Fig.3 Drag and Drop
On DropStuff***



When compression is complete, a brand new file will magically appear in the same folder where the original file or folder was when you dragged it. Therefore, a file or folder that started out on the Desktop will cause a new file to appear on the Desktop. A file or folder that started out in your Documents folder will cause a new file to appear in your Documents folder. This new file is the com-

pressed file; this is the file you will want to send via email or post to a web site.

How do I send files to others via Email?

The exact instructions on how to "attach" a file to an email should be obtained from the documentation that came with the email program you use. We can give you some basic pointers here.

Once you have a compressed file (such as we created in section g. above) you can usually attach it to an email by simply dragging it into the body of the email message you are about to send. Examples in this section are based on Outlook Express as the email program; your email program will vary.

You will know that the file is attached because some mention of it will usually be made in the header (top portion) of the email message.

Now all you have to do is address and send the message. The recipient(s) will receive not only your message, but also the compressed file you attached.

What if I've sent an email attachment to a Windows or Linux computer user?

If the recipient of your attached file is not on a Macintosh...NO PROBLEM! We at Aladdin Systems make StuffIt Expander for Macintosh, Windows, and Linux. If the recipient of your file does not have StuffIt Expander, they can simply go to:
<http://www.stuffit.com>

Conclusion

That's it. You have now mastered the basics of compression and Expansion, Drag and Drop, and sending and receiving email attachments. You know more than the average computer user about efficiently moving and using files on the Internet. That is the essence of StuffIt. Want to get fancy? Want to learn more? Then be sure to read the StuffIt Deluxe Users Guide that is installed with your software. or get truly brave and just experiment with the StuffIt Deluxe software you have installed.

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